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THE

No. 7

MUTUAL OBLIGATIONS TO THE EXERCISE  
OF BENEVOLENT AFFECTIONS,

AS THEY RESPECT THE CONDUCT OF ALL THE  
HUMAN RACE TO EACH OTHER,

PROVED, AND APPLIED TO THE STATE OF THE  
SUFFERING AFRICANS.

BY PHILADELPHOS.

Γνεσθε ουν οικτημονες, καθως και ο πλειστος ομιλος οικτημων εστι-

L O N D O N:  
SOLD BY H. GARDNER, IN THE STRAND.

1788.

Price 1s.

THE following pages were composed with a desire to conciliate the affection, and rouse the native generosity of those Britons into whose hands they may fall, to unanimity in a measure which must reflect a lustre upon them to all succeeding ages; when they shall deliver the almost exhausted captive from those disgraceful bonds, which human nature ought to spurn at the idea of riveting upon any individual. — The Author, after he had completed his plan, (and which is now offered, with the greatest diffidence, to the public notice, with a wish only of interesting their feelings as men, and as brethren) was pointed, by a friend, to the note inserted, on the crowding such numbers of unhappy Africans within so narrow a compass. The cruelty of such a proceeding speaks in the strongest language to the feelings of all, except SUCH HARDENED BEINGS who are engaged in this infamous traffic. — Numerous notes might have been added in various parts; but the Author was desirous of offering his own sentiments, without introducing facts which are in the hands of such numbers.

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This small Tribute is respectfully dedicated, with the hope it will be candidly viewed, to those Champions for the cause of Insulted Humanity,

THE SOCIETY INSTITUTED FOR THE PURPOSE OF  
ABOLISHING NEGRO SLAVERY,

BY THE AUTHOR.

The profits, if any, arising from the sale of this pamphlet, will be appropriated to the disposition of the Society, and those purposes for which it was instituted:



A C T S XVII. 24, 25, 26.

GOD, that made the world and all things therein, (seeing that He is Lord of Heaven and Earth) giveth to all, life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the Earth.

THE existence of a First Cause is a truth which comes home to the conscience of every individual of the human race: and that man violates the plainest dictates of reason, conscience, and observation upon every scene of nature which the universe presents to his view, who denies, or even doubts, the existence of A GOD. Nations or kingdoms totally absorbed in the most sottish idolatry, retained some ideas of a Superior Power, to which they ascribed the formation of the world, and the introduction of mankind, as a species of beings designed for the enjoyment of those comforts which they beheld; and which were offered to them, not with a parsimonious hand, but showered down in the greatest profusion, and with a sufficiency to satisfy completely every rational desire.

The regularity of the seasons, the blessings diffused by the genial beams of the sun, and prolific flowers from the clouds, are means designed by Providence for exciting the latent powers of nature, and invigorating the

springs of vegetable life ; thereby to perfect, not only the beauty of every plant, herb, and tree, but to render them instrumental to the support of the animal system of those myriads of beings which were to be called forth, in a regular succession, to participate of the fruits of the divine bounty, wisdom, and goodness. If we examine with any degree of due attention the minutest portion of the divine works, what astonishing tokens of infinite wisdom and goodness appear in fitting creatures with forms suitable to those situations in life they were designed to fill : their capacities for happiness and enjoyment bespeak that discernment which perfectly qualifies them for those blessings intended by the Author of nature, the Giver of every good and perfect gift. In all these inferior works of his hands (if I may term them so with propriety) his glory blazes forth with unequalled lustre. Yet, after our conceptions are raised to the utmost degree, in contemplating his goodness in the animal and vegetable creation, there are still heights to which we may be tempted to soar, but must confess ourselves inadequate to the subject. If we turn our eyes to the rational creation, we shall discover a being possessed of all the animal powers, with an additional gift, which renders him as much superior, and infinitely more so, than the most perfect animal is to the clod of earth, which is destitute of any vital energy. Man is endowed with a rational soul, an immaterial spirit, breathed into him originally by the Almighty, whereby he is allied to angels, and rendered an heir of immortality. He is emphatically styled the offspring of the Deity, with respect to those thinking, active powers which enoble, more or less, every individual of the human race. And herein consists the dignity of his

nature, as proceeding thus qualified from the hands of the Great Artificer. The Psalmist, giving a loose to devout meditations on this interesting subject, thereby to raise some animated ideas of the divine bounty and goodness, and excite a frame of thanksgiving for those blessings, and a proper temper of mind under a sense of them, thus describes the favors of Omnipotence to the children of men : — “ Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands ; Thou hast put all things under his feet : all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth ! ”

Man, as a distinguishing part of the works of God, was originally formed in a very different manner from those creatures over whom he was appointed the subordinate ruler, under God, he was created sole ; his subjects numerous. From him, and that gift of the divine bounty, which was graciously provided as the solace and comfort of his existence, as a social creature, proceeded those numerous families, with all their various distinctions, which peopled the surface of the earth. And though by a general corruption of manners, and an universal depravity of heart, the Almighty was induced to exterminate an abandoned race, almost totally by a deluge : yet by one family, as at first by one pair, they have been again multiplied to those innumerable millions which now cover the globe. Doubtless the same power and wisdom by which inferior ranks of beings were

created, could as easily have formed the human race equally numerous, or more so: yet, among other reasons why this mode was not adopted, the following appears to carry some weight: — Man, as before observed, was designed for a social creature, and the interests of various families might have been esteemed and operated so contrary to each other, that they would have been the sources of perpetual bickerings and animosities, which ought to be effectually banished by this consideration, that they are all derived from one source; and therefore, though the removes might be distant, the remembrance would, on any temptation to acts of rapine or blood-shedding, smite their consciences, and interest their natural feelings on the part of consanguinity, if those of common justice or equity were at any time weakened. These reflections, that they were all members of one large family, would promote peace and harmony, love and benevolence, if duly considered, and confign the irritable passions to oblivion; or, otherwise, take off the edge of their acrimony and rancor.

And this observation, if founded on clear and universal truth, ought undoubtedly to be verified in the conduct of all men, without exception, towards each other. Our sentiments should, without dispute, influence our practice, from this principle, — “that he who made us in the womb made him also. And did not one fashion us in the womb?” Do we not possess the same external form? Do we not enjoy the same intellectual powers (though perhaps the opportunities of unfolding them, or calling them all into action, is not afforded to all equally)? This must be evident to the most superficial observer. — Where the faculties of the mind are abso-

bed by constant and laborious employment, we might as well expect to gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles, as to discover any remarkable exertions of genius, or the understanding, out of that line which takes up all the thoughts and contrivances. It is possible something might be effected to accomplish the labor of the hands with the least bodily exertions, so as not to wear out the frame prematurely. And this would be the extent of the thoughts and wishes.

Deprived of means of instruction whereby the understanding and judgment might be properly exercised, the soul would remain ignorant of her own powers and abilities. Without the improvements of science, those luminaries, which have shed such lustre upon these and other kingdoms, would have emitted only faint or obscure rays; and names which will be the astonishment of all succeeding ages, had sunk in the undistinguished mass, without transmission to posterity. The faculties of the human mind require constant cultivation; either to retain the knowledge they have acquired, or increase their stock of ideas. Without cultivation they will be like a garden or field overrun with noxious weeds. If worthy and good principles are not planted, those of a contrary nature will carry off all the vigor of the mind. Only take a short retrospect of the state of Europe, in general, during that period when mental blindness and depravity overspread the different countries. Could it then have been imagined, that the same species of beings inhabited those kingdoms and nations who, by the gradual extent of christianity, have had the film in some measure removed from their eyes and hearts; and are now crying after knowledge, and lifting up their

voices after understanding. A new world, if I may so express myself, offers itself to their astonished sight : philosophy, arts, and sciences rear their heads ; the benevolent affections acquire fresh vigor ; and universal philanthropy embraces all.

The feelings of humanity, even if we had no other criterion, would have great weight in establishing an hypothesis with respect to the congeniality of our nature. Perhaps there is scarce an instance to be found, unless the person hath been previously hardened by some external circumstances, of so uncommon a portion of obduracy in the human constitution, as that the sufferings of any man should be an object of pleasure, or even of indifference to any other : — I say, with respect to this observation, those feelings of humanity are so much in unison in every individual, that the sight of a miserable or suffering object rouzes our compassion and tender affections ; our bowels yearn over the unhappy creature ; the tear of sympathetic pity starts into our eyes ; and our hearts sink under the weight of sorrows with which we have no personal connection ; we ficken at the hearing only the well-told tale of imaginary woe ; we rejoice in the deliverance of others out of critical or dangerous circumstances, and feel as if we ourselves had escaped out of some imminent or unthought-of danger ; in one word, “ we rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep : ” and hereby prove our affections and passions are the same, are influenced by the same objects, by the same hopes and fears, and we naturally entertain a common expectation anticipating the inferences of reason, and assuring us, that we shall find similar effects in others.

I might shew, in a variety of instances, the constitutional proofs of this assertion, that God has made of one blood, all nations of men that dwell upon the face of the earth ; but shall take it for granted, that those distinctions which are visible, are only simple variations, without affecting the faculties of the mind, or intellectual powers ; and proceed to consider the duties and obligations requisite towards the Creator, and the human race, in their collateral capacity, as descendants from the same Original, as deriving their source from the same common Ancestor, as redeemed by the same Saviour, and as having their hopes and expectations fixed upon the same important blessing, — eternal life.

Our Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor demands our most exalted love, our highest veneration, our most faithful service and undissimbled obedience ; our heart, our soul, our mind, and our strength, our most exalted powers to be exerted in this employment ; and our neighbour and brother we are to love as ourselves : which are the two principle requirements of all natural and revealed religion.

Though the principle intention of the apostle Paul, in his address to the Athenians, was to reclaim them from that idolatry wherein they were immersed, and to raise in their minds the desire of a knowlege of the Deity, from a view of the immensity of his works, in the creation of the world and all its numerous inhabitants; who were all the care of his providence, who were the subjects of his moral government, and, in a future state, were individually to appear before his awful tribunal and there receive a just recompence for all the deeds

done in the body. — Yet, as I am addressing myself to professed Christians, to persons who have been through the whole of their lives favored with *that revelation* which they in general acknowlege to be of divine original, it will not be so necessary to insist upon the proofs of the being and perfections of God, at this time, as upon the duties and obligations men are mutually required to fulfil towards each other ; but from which their passions and interests so far warp their minds, as they are thereby frequently tempted to reject or despise the authority of their Lawgiver, and strike out into such a mode of conduct as is more suitable to their corrupt affections and depraved hearts.

It is an observation that will always retain its force,— If we really love God, that love will extend itself to all the works of his hands, whether rational or only animal ; agreeable to the faculties of which they are partakers in common with ourselves, or that state of being and existence whereby they were fitted for filling up their place in the universe. To our fellow-men, our benevolence will be due upon the most extensive plan, our hearts will be enlarged from every consideration that can work upon the feelings of humanity. We shall not merely confine our wishes to those who move in our own contracted circle ; but every nation, every climate, every country, where there is a rational creature, will be the object of our comprehensive desires, of our fervent prayers, that they may enjoy those inestimable blessings to the fullest extent, of which we either partake, or to which reason, improved by revelation and true religion, points, as the felicity, the supreme felicity of man.

Do we wish to enlarge our connections with our brethren of mankind? — The purpose for which this will is formed, ought to be, a desire to increase their intellectual happiness, to open their understandings, to communicate new sources of knowledge; to introduce, not merely those arts and sciences which will raise their importance in a commercial scale, by increasing their wants, and creating and encouraging habits of industry, with the extension of manufactures. These indeed are necessary in the list of the comforts of civil life, the ideas whereof are very weak and imperfect among a larger proportion of the inhabitants of the world than we are able adequately to conceive. — Yet is this all? If our efforts were to subside into attempts for animal gratifications, the ebullitions of caprice, fancy, or whim, are we answering the purposes for which we were sent into the world? Can we lay our hands upon our hearts, and appeal to God, that we have conscientiously performed the whole of our duty? Surely no: something of infinitely greater consequence yet remains behind. To this, then, let us turn our attention; and ask, what is our duty farther on this point? There are duties wherewith the eternal interests of men are most intimately connected: — The obligations to morality and religion. If we see individuals, or nations, sunk in ignorance, or mental depravity and blindness; will not true compassion excite us to concert the most rational plan of raising them to that intellectual importance, which the noble, but degraded, faculties of their minds demand, with an earnestness and vigor, <sup>some</sup> degree proportionate to the superior value of the soul, above every other consideration. It is necessary, however, in this point, to consult the dictates of that prudence and piety which the

Gospel teaches; to make it evident, not only to those we attempt to instruct, but to every observer, that we are actuated by the purest principles of christianity, that our only desire is, to point out to them, and put them into the path that leads to eternal life; to make them acquainted with the nature and consequences of *that liberty* which is to be obtained through Christ, from *that slavery* and bondage which is of the most humiliating kind, which benumbs all the faculties of the soul, and reduces to a state most aptly compared to death. To display, in all their lustre, as far as our weak abilities are equal to the work, to such who are yet unacquainted with those fundamental truths, the glory and perfections of the Deity, in his works of creation, providence, and redemption; his infinite love in providing for the future happiness of his creatures, inferring the Son of his love, who is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, to recover lost man from final perdition; who by his atonement and sacrifice for sin condemned sin in the flesh; by his resurrection from the dead, and restoration to life, gave an ocular demonstration, to his professed disciples and followers, of the truth of his pretensions, that he came from God; by every miracle performed by him and his apostles, a fresh seal was set to the truth of those doctrines whose only tendency was, to make mankind wise and good: to this purpose he set before them a perfect example; an example replete with every grace and virtue; exhorting and commanding propriety of conduct, and perfection of character in all his followers to the end of time. And, to render their endeavors successful, divine influences were promised and provided; the Spirit of holiness and purity to instruct and sanctify their minds in this world, by a course of mortification of sin, self-

denial, with respect to every vicious indulgence, and genuine piety and universal righteousness, to prepare them for the enjoyment of his heavenly kingdom. — These are truths revealed with evidence sufficient to answer every objection, by the sacred scriptures. These are doctrines, with many others of a similar and equally important nature, contained in that rule of faith and practice, the Gospel Revelation ; and which the friends to the human species wish to inculcate to the utmost of their power, and render the knowledge of them as extensive as the habitable globe ; that every individual might, if possible, reap the advantages to be acquired by them, and live agreeable to the principles of reason and true religion.

Yet we have abundant cause to deplore the fatal influences of vice, and the depravity of the human heart, that this kingdom of righteousness and peace, established by our blessed Lord, and which is not of this world, has been deformed, and its energy, in a great measure, destroyed and counteracted by the shocking enormities practised by his *professed friends* ; but, with this profession, destitute of every good principle, destitute of that public and private virtue and goodness, which heretofore was the distinguishing character of genuine christians ; so far from sustaining the character of servants of God and disciples of the blessed Jesus, they have been worshippers of mammon, and seeking every opportunity, without regarding the common, universal notions of justice and equity which had obtained a sanction in the most informed countries, of accumulating immense property by the most nefarious methods, though they could not ensure their enjoyment of it for one moment after con-

tracting the guilt consequent upon such acquisitions. And commerce, which was designed by Providence to connect the distant parts of the world in the bonds of amity and mutual convenience, to diffuse the blessings of civilization and comforts of life upon the most extensive scale, is diverted from its original intention, when deformed by avarice, fraud, ambition, or any other noxious vice ; when the PERSONS of men are made the objects thereof, instead of the materials which are the natural produce of different countries ; and which, custom has introduced as the conveniences, or habit has taught them to esteem the necessaries of life.

The Great Governor of the universe, from his knowledge of the human heart, and foresight of the future behaviour of his creatures towards each other, thought fit, in his infinite wisdom, to establish, more especially amongst the descendants of one branch of his great family, a code of laws of a moral as well as ceremonial nature : those of a moral tendency were suited to inculcate good government and propriety of conduct to the world at large ; and were designed to be of perpetual obligation ; that is, as long as the present system was continued. These laws were calculated to perpetuate benevolence and love in all succeeding generations ; and to banish entirely, or remain as a constant protest against those criminal actions whereby they might be broken, or the spirit and true meaning of them invaded. Their excellency and worth is at present acknowledged by all professing christians, and they are admitted into every system of legislation amongst them, as the foundation of every principle of natural justice and equity which binds men to each other. And if we advert to nations

who were without these written instructions, we shall evidently discover the Almighty left not himself without witness, by impressing upon their hearts such sentiments as were congenial to human nature. These persons, having not the law, are a law unto themselves, which shew the work of the law written in their hearts ; their consciences witnessing with them, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another. They either had, or might have obtained such a knowlege of God, from the visible creation around them ; or the light of their understanding, as to be sensible the practice of unrighteousness rendered them objects of the divine wrath ; and that in the practice of their duty towards their fellow-men, they experienced a gratification and complacency of mind which assured them of the rectitude of their conduct. — But this part of the argument I shall not at present consider : as my design is not to investigate the duties and obligations incumbent upon every branch of mankind to each other ; but more eminently of those who enjoy the unspeakable blessing of a Gospel Revelation to those who are *now* destitute of it ; and the necessity of spreading the same knowlege if they wish to promote the happiness of their brethren.

We may here observe the laws and institutions of the Deity are marked with a precision which cannot be mistaken ; they are couched in the concisest terms, they correct every vicious principle and moral disorder, and are a perfect example to every human legislator, to endeavor to check the commission of irregular actions. Laws were not originally designed so much for the punishment as prevention of evil ; and hold out their sanctions for the terror of those whose minds were un-

affected with a sense of duty or good principles.—God, as the Creator and Universal Governor, had an exclusive authority to propose regulations for the use and advantage of those creatures he had formed, to fill up what would otherwise have appeared a chasm in the rank of beings ; and to them, in mercy, he propounded necessary rules, not only to point out propriety of behaviour towards him, but to all those who were invested with ~~such~~ like faculties as himself, and descended from the same common parent. The animal world, as before observed, was submitted to the dominion of man ; but man himself was free, and subject only to the dominion of God, his sole rightful Lord and Ruler : unless, when they were multiplied in subsequent ages, for the advantage of society, they might see it necessary to collect themselves into bodies, and depute some person or persons of superior understanding and sagacity to conduct those affairs to which the community at large could not with equal effect attend. When thus formed into communities, from different tempers and dispositions, some might be found not so attentive to good order and the practice of virtue, as the interests of society demanded; on this account, and because large bodies of persons will necessarily contain some unworthy members, whose evil examples might be contagious ; it has been always esteemed of the highest advantage to promulgate such regulations as would tend to maintain public peace and tranquillity. To this purpose the Almighty himself issued a system of laws, to the observance of which he required the strictest attention. They expressly forbid, among other things, taking away the life, or any species of actions which might produce such consequences ; purloining the property of another, either by open violence

or secret fraud; and even so much as the wish to enjoy that property in prejudice of another. The security of life and the protection of property were then two of the rules laid down for the observance of the Israelites, and they retain the same efficacy for regulating the conduct of all mankind towards each other, in every part of the world. If there is no right to the life or property of another, *his person* is equally free, *his liberty* ought not to be infringed, and no one has a right to bring his brother into bondage; unless he has forfeited his liberty by criminal conduct, or becomes amenable to the sentence of those laws which that country has adopted that grants him protection. — But I am neither capable, or, was ~~it~~ so, do I think it necessary to enter into a disquisition of the propriety, or impropriety of national codes, however they may shock my feelings in a variety of instances: yet I would hold up to every individual the immutable rule of justice and equity; to legislators as well as the governed, that absolute command, — “*Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also unto them: — for this is, the law.*” — This ought to be the foundation of every action, whether political, moral, or religious. And whatever is contrary to this, howsoever the perpetrators may refine upon their conduct, or attempt to explain the spirit of it away, such an one is absolutely and unconditionally self condemned by the sentence of that God who is *truth itself*. Examine, if it is necessary to clear your understandings, or inform your judgments, You, whose avarice is insatiable, who are engaged in those infamous practices, at the bare mention of which nature shudders, which reason and religion mark in the catalogue of the blackest vices, and even the untutored savage rejects with horror, but which

the most detestable policy covers with a flimsy mantle ; examine the laws of the Eternal Jehovah, and if you are able to contend with him, continue to break them without dread of the consequences. He that guarded the property of man with such an awful sanction, surely had an equal regard to his personal liberty, and the security of that first and greatest privilege of our nature. Therefore he says, — “ He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.” — The apostle Paul, in his first epistle to Timothy, ch. i. v. 10, shows the necessity of such laws, either to prevent the commission, or punish the perpetrators of those crimes which affect the community in general ; and also to preserve the weak from the rapacious hands of insolent and treacherous villainy. And he there exhibits a list which fills the mind with horror at a view of the depravity of human nature ; and with the persons particularized in that dreadful description he ranks men-stealers ; these indeed may be equally guilty with the former ; as the effects of their crimes are productive of every enormity that can disgrace or demonize the rational powers of men. Let every friend to humanity disclaim all connections with them, and say with the patriarch, — “ O my soul, come not thou into their secret, unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united ;” for unless they forsake such a practice they deserve to be excluded from the common blessings of society and friendship, and to wander like the first murderer, as fugitives and vagabonds, in a desolate and uninhabited land. —

The provisional law, by the same authority, for those who had escaped from a state of slavery, is of such a

nature as absolutely destroys the visionary claim of right or justice in those who detained their brethren in bondage ; and makes a remarkable distinction between a state of servitude and *slavery*. Those who fled from the latter, were to be received with open arms, and admitted to the liberty of dwelling in any part of their country which was most agreeable to them ; and there was a strict command they should not suffer any kind of oppression ; out of a sympathetic compassion ~~from~~ those who, either personally, or in their ancestors, had smarted under the sufferings of such a state : those who fled from a temporary servitude were to be restored to their masters, unless there was a just and sufficient ground for their release ; such as cruelty, or negligence in discharging obligations to which they had subjected themselves.

So cautious was the Great Lawgiver to prevent any circumstances that might have a tendency to excite a ferocious and sanguinary disposition, a hard and unfeeling temper, that whenever publick justice demanded its rights upon the most atrocious criminals ; or punishments not capital were to be inflicted upon breaches of good order and natural equity ; in the former, they were not to forget that they were men ; and though an excision was required, it was not to be attended with any unnecessary cruelty, but a speedy dissolution : towards those who were the objects of less rigorous penalties, mildness was recommended and inforced by the best motives ; lest they should be rendered vile and worthless in the eyes of the judges or the people at large ; as offenders would be thereby precluded from a probability of repentance for their misconduct, and an inclination or wish to forsake those evil courses which had covered them with

ignominy and reproach : by mildness they might be encouraged to consider that discipline as salutary, and as preserving them in the issue from final destruction. These considerations are highly necessary and peculiarly affecting on the view of all men, as deriving their existence from one common source. On this account the propriety of the divine laws and regulations apply ~~themselves~~ to our feelings with the strongest energy. For as we entertain a natural predilection towards those who are united to us by the bonds of consanguinity, and are peculiarly interested in their welfare or sufferings, we are hereby instructed to consider every individual of the human race as standing in the same relation to us ; and therefore they have all an equal title to our affectionate regard as men : " and no man," says the apostle, " ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it." Here, then, our duty is specified in unequivocal language ; and however we may be deficient in the performance of those points humanity requires, thus the matter will stand in the sight of God ; and this he hath assured us will be the foundation of his final discrimination of characters when they are summoned before his awful bar, to receive a recompence for all the deeds done in the body : those then will receive judgment, without a mixture of mercy, who have showed no mercy : and how dreadful and alarming such a sentence will be, it is impossible for the human tongue to utter, or human faculties to conceive. May none of us be convinced of its reality by our feelings !

As the Gospel disclaims any attempt to bring the human race into a state of slavery, nay expresses the utmost

abhorrence of such conduct, Reason is equally inimical to such an unjust claim.

By Reason, I mean those genuine dictates, so far as we can discover them, unsophisticated by the corruptions of base and unnatural vices, whereby the powers of the mind receive a false bias. I call them unnatural vices, because they originate in a depravity of temper, generally acquired either from the evil examples around us, or indulgence of passions and affections in themselves good ; which, yet, when fixed on wrong objects, gain a superiority which is destructive of benevolent affections and virtuous habits. Reason demands an exertion of our mental faculties to promote such plans as shall be productive of mutual advantage to all who partake of the same nature : this gift of Providence was never intended by the Governor of the universe to waste its vigor in framing schemes for the subjugation of the souls or bodies of men ; or compelling the weak to submit to the more powerful. Indeed, covetousness and ambition advance pleas of this kind ; pride and haughtiness raise ideas in a presumptuous mortal diametrically opposite to truth and sobriety of thought : reason allows a moderate difference in the degrees and ranks of men ; a free subordination, whereby they are rendered mutually useful to each other : by this diversity social affections also acquire strength, and loye and harmony become more diffusive. But because one, or a comparatively small number, are possessed in a larger proportion, of some of the adventitious benefits of society, is it a consequence that they have a right to compel others, over whom they can claim no authority or superiority but what is acquired by the iron hand of power, or any other means than

an assumed authority equally unjust, yet at the same time pregnant with every natural and moral evil, which leaves the deepest vestiges of destruction in their paths ? I ask, is it consonant to reason to search out and depopulate distant climes, for victims, to gratify the voluptuousness of a few strangers ; or that some other countries, or individuals, may enjoy what custom hath taught them to call the necessities and delicacies of life ? Reason will instruct us to moderate our desires ; reason will instruct us, the fewer our wants the more agreeable to nature, enjoyment, and true satisfaction. That the happiness of life doth not consist in abundance, but mediocrity ; that it doth not consist in gratifying the capricious demands of a whimsical palate ; that no comfortable reflections can be raised upon a retrospect of past time, merely to observe, we have enjoyed a larger proportion of what are termed the good things of life. — But, have we employed our time in cultivating those intellectual powers and faculties which are the distinguishing characteristics of man ? Did reason ever excite any individual to toil, to sweat, to bleed, or to die by the most insupportable anguish, to gratify the lowest and most despicable indulgences of animal life ? Would reason ever bring a fellow-man, upon whom was stamped the same image of the Deity with ourselves, into the most degrading circumstances, if he had not brought himself into that situation as a punishment of those vices which rendered him a publick enemy to all decency and good order ; to the well-being, or even the lives of others ? Crimes loudly demand punishment for the injuries they have produced : but perpetual slavery even of the offender himself, is an object rather of horror than of social justice : the individual it plunges into the

lowest abyss of despair ; the community it strikes with the base and petrifying idea of despotic power ; it is therefore neither useful for information, nor for example ; but to be avoided by the policy of every country which regards the temper and spirit of the people ; and wishes to preserve the inviolable rights of humanity : and even were these principles to be overlooked, at least those who are innocent have a right to freedom. By what claim of justice or equity can the inhabitants of one country, or nation, seize on the harmless, inoffensive inhabitants of another, and force them into perpetual slavery ? In such flagrant injustice there is a wilful, and deliberate breach of the laws of God ; of every idea of good government, of the rules of reason and moral equity, and of that right every individual hath to liberty, without being subject to compulsion, violence, and the terrors of slavery.

The persons upon whom this arbitrary stretch of unnatural rapine, fraud, and villany hath been, and is yet exercised without compunction or remorse ; may with an equal degree of justice, and perhaps with more, by way of retaliation for their unmerited sufferings for centuries, commit the same depredations upon the persons and properties of their cruel persecutors : — and would they be objects of pity and compassion ? Would not the proper answer to such be, — “ Verily there is a righteous Judge that ruleth among the children of men ? ” — Let then the guilty in this, as well as in every other respect, “ cease to do evil, and learn to do well ; to do justice and judgment, for the righteous Lord loveth such ; and such only shall prosper in their ways.”

As the practice of bringing any of the human race into slavery is contrary to religion and reason, it is likewise contrary to the best feelings of our nature. It is, in one word, absolutely, and to all intents and purposes, — unnatural.

Our souls, our nature revolts at the thought. Let even the wretch whose mind is callous to the sentiments of humanity, view the paths which have been taken, and are yet pursued ~~to~~ to accomplish this inhuman traffick, and if his heart is not harder than the nether millstone; if ever one serious thought flashes over his mind, though as instantaneous as the lightning, — he will tremble; — his conscience must be on the rack; — and some compunction for the undeserved misery he hath perpetuated upon, not solely an individual, but multitudes, will sink him in despair. — Can those expect to find mercy themselves from the hand of God, who have their hearts steeled against that most amiable of all social graces with which the human breast can be ennobled? — A display of only an imperfect sketch of the feelings, the agonizing tortures which fall to the lot of the unhappy sufferers under this ignominious treatment, will apply itself to our hearts with an energy and sympathy that will make an impression, more lasting than any other argument which can be offered; and convince us of the truth asserted by the Apostle. We feel ourselves interested in their fate; we shudder at the cruelties inflicted upon them; and our just indignation is roused against those who have thus degraded the dignity of our nature in the face of the world, without a blush upon their countenances.

Let us only dispassionately view the situation of those

wretched creatures, whom a wise Providence permits, for inscrutable purposes, to sustain such indignities ; it must appear unnatural in the perpetrators and actors in those deplorable scenes. View the objects of their sacrilegious rapacity and avarice, in the enjoyment of the blessings of domestic peace and tranquillity, with their families and connections ; partaking of the comforts arising from the bountiful gifts of the God of nature, in a climate abounding with every thing that can administer to the real wants, or superfluous wishes of its contented inhabitants, with a happiness and fertility of soil, that doth not require any painful exertions to reap the fruits of their labors. The prolific vigor of nature supplies their necessities with an astonishing increase, of which the possessors of less happy regions can scarcely form a conception. These blessings they enjoy without murmuring or repining, — with a degree of contentment and satisfaction, those who boast of superior advantages from civilization too rarely cherish. They have, from habit and situation, the happy art (not to them, indeed, an art, but seldom learnt, where extreme refinements prevail) of circumscribing their wants, in general, within the compass of their enjoyments. They do not appear, at least for many centuries past, to have cultivated an intercourse with more distant nations, to add to their stock of benefits : but parents and children, husbands and wives, the governors and governed were perfectly easy with their lot : and, for any thing that appears to the contrary, they even yet continue to fulfil the duties of faithful subjects to their superiors, tender parents, obedient children, affectionate, obliging, and sincere as husbands and wives ; compassionate and willing to relieve not only the distresses and wants of those who dwell

upon the same continent, but of strangers and enemies ; faithful and equitable, just and honorable in their publick and private dealings, either with foreigners or each other. In former ages, blest with strength of mind to conceive, and abilities to cultivate, not merely the more common arts and sciences of which Europeans make their boast, but to investigate those of the most abstruse and complex nature, and elucidate them : in short, their mental faculties have appeared equal, in past ages, if not superior, to those of colder climates ; they have produced the most pious and judicious divines, the most sagacious statesmen, the most accomplished and successful generals, the keenest and most penetrating lawyers, the most sage and learned physicians, the most ingenious and skilful mechanicks, (which occasioned a law about the year 328, or 329, to employ Africans in preference to others, through the wide, extended empire of Rome, for their docility in learning, and their superiority of skill, after instruction, in improving upon mechanical inventions) the most brilliant characters in every walk of life, from the humble citizen to the elevated prince that wields the sceptre. — And this may, in some degree, be explained on rational principles : viz. A climate replete with striking, natural images presented to the imagination and judgment; together with their food, which is adapted, not to burden the body, or darken the mind; but leave the faculties sufficient room to display themselves to advantage. And as they once were eminent for these excellencies, to what can their present failure be ascribed, but a neglect of instruction, a loss of those means of improvement they once happily possessed. This makes that distinction between civilized and savage countries. It was the absence of this rendered the inhabitants

of this land in past ages, painted savages ; strangers to the comforts and enjoyments of social life : and as the different arts and sciences have made their transit over the globe, ignorance and blindness have in many places resumed their empire, for the same reason that night returns on the absence of the sun. — And why should not the same, or even greater, respect be paid to the untutored descendant of a worthy African, as to the present inhabitants of that spot, or land, where the proud mistress of the world once unfurled her insatiable banners ; but where now resides the undistinguished posterity, who united their utmost efforts, with fatal success, against arts and sciences, till gross darkness eclipsed all the former glory of Rome ; and superstition reared her portentous trophies on the buried ruins of civil and religious freedom ? — Surely some veneration is due to the posterity of those memorable characters, whose purity of blood does not appear contaminated by such heterogeneous mixtures ; whose national peculiarities still remain the same. But this long-neglected quarter of the earth might have yet continued an object of disregard, had not that hunger for gold, and avarice, which knows no bounds, prompted needy adventurers to search after this fascinating metal at the hazard of their own lives ; with the probability of extirpating every remaining good principle. This induced those men originally to invade the peaceful dwellings of the innocent African ; and if they could not obtain this produce of their country, to seize their persons, and carry them into distant lands ; where others, destitute of the fear of God, the love of their brethren, or the common dictates of humanity, purchased the trembling and astonished stranger, and employed him in works so far exceeding the

measure of human strength even in its best circumstances, and with the fairest encouragement; (how disproportionate then to the strength, the spirit, the possible exertions of a wretched, despairing captive; exhausted with the horrors of his dreadful voyage, trembling beneath the scourge, and enfeebled in every power by the torpid influence of slavery!) that even the vigor of the brute was not able to sustain, but he soon sunk under the burden.

Turn your eyes, though but for a moment, upon the steps pursued in this infamous traffick; and then lay your hands upon your hearts, and ask yourselves, — Is this consistent with the feelings of men, were the commands of religion to be utterly disregarded? View the unhappy object of this criminal, this inhuman, this impious commerce, ensnared by every disgraceful artifice, torn by violence from his native country, to which every individual has a natural predilection; from every connection, cemented either by friendship, affection, or blood; which twine round his heart, are interwoven in his constitution, and form the felicity of his life. This cruelty is exercised, not only upon the robust and powerful, upon men; but the softer sex, the harmless child, the innocent and helpless suckling equally share in the same common evil. As to the means used to entrap the unwary, or bring all ranks, indiscriminately, into bondage; they are so replete with horror, cruelty, and blood; such refinements upon every thing which is inimical to the feelings of humanity, that we wish they could be expunged from the page of history, and consigned to perpetual oblivion: and are ready, under the horrors of such outrages, to disclaim the name of men.

— Yet, such wrongs are perpetrated, such miseries daily inflicted! — What must the conceptions of the poor, distressed sufferer be, when he finds himself arrested by the hand of a superior power, and about to bid an everlasting adieu to all those comforts and enjoyments where-with he had formerly solaced himself through the past period of life, and confined in bonds, within a small compass\*, among hundreds of his suffering species;

\* “ I shall give the Reader the dimensions of two vessels that failed, about six months ago, from a British port, to the coast of Africa, for slaves. I do not mean as tenders to other ships; but to collect them on their own account, and to carry them to the colonies.

“ One of them was a vessel of twenty-five tons. The length of the upper part of the hold, or roof of the rooms where the slaves were to be confined, was thirty-one feet. The greatest breadth of the bottom, or floor, was ten feet, four inches; and the least five. The depth, or height, was rather less than four. This vessel was calculated and failed for *seventy* slaves.

“ It is clear, that none of the unfortunate people, perhaps at this moment on board, can stand upright; but that they must sit down and contract their limbs within the limits of little more than three square feet, during the whole of the middle passage.

“ The other vessel measured *eleven* tons. The length of the apartment for the slaves was twenty-two feet. The greatest breadth of the floor, eight; and the least, four. The depth two feet, eight inches. This vessel was calculated and failed for *thirty* slaves.

“ Any person of a moderate height, standing upon dry ground, by the side of this vessel, might overlook every thing upon the deck; as her height from the keel to the beam was but five feet, eight inches: three of which were engrossed by ballast, cargo, and provisions; and the rest was left for — slaves.

“ The only idea that will, perhaps, strike the reader, in examining these dimensions, will be, that the apartment must be in shape and size, as well as in heat, similar to an oven. — And to flew

subject to every indignity and abuse that can be inflicted by a capricious and unfeeling tyrant, who hath not so much as a single idea of alleviating those unmerited dis-

how preposterously the advocates for slavery talk, when they declaim upon the accommodations for slaves ; this very *boat* was built for the pleasure and convenience of about *six* free persons upon the Severn.

“ If it should be said, that the larger vessels have better accommodations : I reply, that it can only be in the height of the room, the slaves being stowed equally close. — In some of these they have not had so much room upon the floor by one square foot, as in those which have been just specified ; for I have known the number of slaves which many of them have carried, and have had their apartments measured.

“ Being stowed in the manner thus described, they soon begin to experience the effects which might naturally be presumed to arise from their situation. In consequence of the pestilential breath of so many confined in so small a place, they become sickly : and from the vicissitude of heat and cold — of heat, when confined below, and of cold, when suddenly brought up for air — a flux is generated. Whenever this disorder attacks them, no pen can be adequate to the task of describing their situation. Imagine, only for a moment, the gratings to be opened, but particularly after a rain, which has occasioned them to be covered for some time ; the first scene that presents itself is, a cluster of unhappy people, who, overcome by excessive heat and stench, have fainted away.

“ The next that occurs is, that of one of them endeavoring to press forward to the light, to catch a mouthful of wholesome air, but hindered by the partner of his chains, who is lying dead at his feet, and whom he has not sufficient strength to drag after him.

“ The third is conspicuous in the instance of those who are just on the point of fainting : and who are wallowing in the blood and mucus of the intestines, with which the floor is covered.

“ Such are the scenes that universally present themselves : — and how agonizing and insufferable their situation must have been during this period of their confinement, none, I believe, can possibly conceive, unless they had been the partners of their chains.” —

troubles which make their hearts ready to burst with anguish ! After being the subjects of every thing which is the greatest possible outrage to the lowest notions of

**CLARKSON's Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species.** Second Edition, p. 92, 93, 94.

Can any individual read this without feeling his resentment inflamed to the highest degree ? — If so ; he ought to be forever disowned by his fellow-men.

The dreadful and malignant consequences arising from crowding the unhappy Negroes within so small a compass during their passage from Africa to the West Indies, whereby they are deprived of those advantages arising from a free circulation of air, &c. and many severe bodily indispositions join to render the feelings of their minds more acute and poignant ; their distresses in this state have given rise to a temporary expedient, by a bill, just brought into parliament, by Sir W. DOLBEN, whose compassion was excited on a view of this enormity, to afford the present sufferers a momentary relief : not with a design to become the foundation of any future regulations, as all pretended regulations in this traffic can never reconcile it to the natural principles of humanity and justice, which are absolutely, and in toto, at variance with the principle and practice ; but to meliorate their condition and restrain some of the horrors attending their voyage, during the present session of parliament ; which, from an unforeseen and unfortunate circumstance, there was a kind of necessity of deferring the intended relief, by the long and dangerous illness of Mr. WILBERFORCE, who gave notice of his design to bring in a bill for that purpose. Waiting for his restoration to a state of convalescence, so much time unavoidably elapsed, as rendered it necessary to defer the bill to the next session : when, there is sufficient ground to believe, this important work will be consummated in defiance of every obstacle raised by those who prefer the gains of an unrighteous and unnatural commerce, to the claims of humanity, equity, and the laws of God, — There is reason for general gratitude to the goodness of Providence, that a person is raised up and inspired with such an undaunted spirit. May his virtuous endeavors be crowned with success, and the na-

decency and modesty, during their transportation ; they arrive at length at that period when their sorrows ought to be at an end, when some compensation should take place for the unkind and ungenerous treatment under which they have languished : yet, instead of the prospect brightening, the clouds gather with a more formidable aspect, the storm will soon burst upon their devoted heads with tenfold fury : — they are transferred over to some avaritious planter, who purchases them like beasts of the field ; they are delivered into the hands of some cruel taskmaster, and deprived of nourishing and necessary food ; subject to the incessant exercise of the lash, which macerates their naked bodies, and covers them with wounds and bruises ; their strength is soon exhausted, nature not being permitted to recruit herself with proper rest, deprived even of the melancholy pleasure (if I may so term it) of reciting or contemplating upon their misfortunes, under the penalty of an encrease of punishment ; for thinking ; subjected to every accumulated misery and distress from the master or his servants ; they sink at length under their burdens, and their place is supplied by fresh objects, who are to sustain the same, or greater sorrows. And for what ? — To gratify the palate of still greater strangers, who are placed at a much farther distance ; but who have, in general, hitherto been ignorant of the toil, the sweat, the blood, the

tion at large long flourish under the influence of those counsels which are the result of prudence, justice, and incorruptible integrity ; and, after the long exercise of every public and private virtue, may he obtain that reward which the Great Governor of the world will bestow upon all his faithful servants !

lives which have been sacrificed to procure them a momentary pleasure.

Here it might be naturally asked, — In all this neglect and waste of the human race, though their bodies have been destroyed, whether some attention hath not been paid to the improvement of their minds, to rescue them from the blindness and ignorance wherein they were found ? Have not professed Christians shown some compassion to their souls, and endeavored to illuminate their understandings, by making them acquainted with the sacred scriptures ; thereby bringing them to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus ; displaying that future happiness reserved for all those who are made holy, who are purified by the grace and spirit of God ; of every nation and people under heaven ? — This is a question to which an answer must, in general, be returned in the negative. — Doth not this Gospel condemn, in the strongest and severest language their own breach of its most glorious and benign precepts, *those of shewing mercy* ? What a perpetual satire are such men upon themselves ? How do they obstruct the progress of christianity, and render even the very name disgusting to those who see only the vices it reprobates, but none of the virtues it so powerfully recommends, and peremptorily demands from all those that are the real disciples of the Blessed Jesus ? If there are blessings to be obtained by christianity, is it not the duty of every christian to render them as extensive as possible, to bring every human creature to the enjoyment of them ? The command of our Blessed Lord was, to preach the Gospel to every creature under heaven. And if the salvation and deliverance of the soul, and impressing upon it the

image of God in righteousness and true holiness ; if implanting the seed of every grace which can exalt the nature of man ; and the crowning the faithful follower of Jesus with everlasting life, are blessings of the greatest importance ; surely this religious system demands our most strenuous endeavors to inculcate it with the greatest diligence and care. — If to this we add the unspeakable, love, and compassion manifested by Jesus to sinful men, who left the regions of glory, the bosom of his Father, and was veiled in human flesh, who became a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief ; who suffered every indignity and reproach from implacable enemies during the whole period of his life ; and, at length, suffered a most painful and ignominious death, — *the death of a slave*, of a wretched outcast neglected by earth and heaven, to purchase life and happiness for us at the expence of his own ; can we reflect upon the humiliation, the sufferings, and the death of Christ, without the strongest emotions of gratitude, without feeling some good affections struggling to vent themselves in obedience to his commands ? Can we view the human race collectively, as interested in those very important privileges, and shall we be the unhappy instruments of hardening their hearts, of exciting them to reject this Saviour and his gracious offers with contempt and abhorrence, through our vices and enormities ? — How unspeakably dreadful must our condemnation be at the day of final judgment.

If, as our Lord himself hath positively asserted, it were better for that man, that a millstone were tied about his neck, and he was cast into the midst of the sea, than that he should offend the conscience of the very least, the feeblest-minded of his followers ; what must be

their punishment who prevent the reception of the Gospel by millions ; or refuse to instruct the ignorant, who for centuries have perished through lack of knowledge, in numbers too great, almost, for the strongest combination of figures to call by their proper names, to evince their magnitude ? Will not such first-rate sinners, and their descendants treading in the same steps, with terror and amazement, call upon the rocks and mountains to fall upon them, and hide them from the face of their Judge, when he shall come to make inquisition for blood, when he shall call them to an account for those human souls which have been lost through their instrumentality or neglect ? And if one soul is of more intrinsic value than the whole material world, what must be the worth of myriads ? May this reflection, which is of such unspeakable, I may say, infinite importance, strike deeply every serious, thinking person, and persuade them to act consistently with such an awful and affecting sentiment !

These are the ideas we ought to entertain with respect to our duty towards mankind collectively, as participating of the same nature, the same intellectual powers and faculties, the same original feelings, impelled or excited by the same motives, hopes, and fears ; capable of the same enjoyments and improvements of a moral and religious kind ; candidates for the same happiness, and which must be obtained by the same means.

Hence we are led to bow to that Infinite Wisdom and Benevolence which connected the felicity of his creatures and his own glory in so inseparable a manner, that what promotes the former displays the latter with the most amiable lustre : the formation of the universe and every

rank of beings point out the perfections of his nature, in a light that must leave every rational creature without excuse, who doth not give him the glory due unto his name. The blessings of his Providence, and the richer gifts of his grace, demand a tribute of universal praise and thanksgiving: for these, let all the works of his hands magnify and adore the Universal Maker, Governor, and Benefactor. He not only bestows the comforts of life; but every other of an inferior nature is the effect of Infinite Wisdom and Goodness, without any desert in the creature; who can claim nothing of right, but must receive all as the fruits of unmerited favor from him, whose tender mercy is over all the works of his hands; and who bestoweth upon all the universe general tokens of his kindness, to fill their hearts with food and gladness, and raise a devotional and pious frame of mind, with humble and fervent endeavors to shew forth his praise.

The mercies we enjoy should not only fill our hearts with thankfulness on our own account, but raise our compassion for those who languish under the want of them; and more especially when such miseries and sufferings have not been apparently merited by flagrant enormities.

When we hear, or read, of myriads swept off by contagious disorders, by famine, by earthquakes, by the sword, or any desolating judgment, or visitation, our bowels yearn over the sufferers, our sympathy is roused, from a conviction, that we are liable to the same calamities; yet we bow with submission to the dispensations of an allwise Providence, to that Almighty Being whose

ways are in the deep waters, and whose footsteps we do not comprehend : we are assured, that infinite wisdom and goodness direct all his dealings ; that justice and equity are the establishment of his throne ; that the Judge of all the earth does no otherwise than right. — Yet, there are many circumstances in Providence for which we cannot account ; their propriety we cannot possibly fathom by the most vigorous exertions of reason. The expostulation of the prophet, which we see daily verified, fills our minds with wonder and astonishment ; not merely at the forbearance of God exercised towards the wicked and profligate, but in our endeavors to justify the ways of God to men. All acknowlege, that God is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon those grievances such numbers feel and lament, as an unconcerned spectator : — “ wherefore lookeſt thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he ; and makeſt men as the fishes of the sea, as the creeping things that have no ruler over them ? They catch them in their net, therefore they rejoice and are glad. Shall they therefore empty their net, and not ſpare continually to ſlay the nations ? ” — Have we not much more reason to deplore the wretched fate of thoſe, who fall under the power of men whose very tender mercies are cruelty, than ſuch who are ſacrifices to the convulsions of nature, or the ravages of diſtemper. ~~But~~ the full elucidation of the deſign of Providence in permitting these evils, is to be expected when the counſils of eternity ſhall be hereafter diſclosed, in a ſtate of happiness and perfection : but ~~but~~ in the preſent ſtate, one intention of the Deity we may affiuſe ouरſelves we do not miſapprehend : — That

from the impulses excited by these distressing scenes, we should learn to cultivate the humane and beneficent affections.

Can we supinely bear to see the tender orphan stretching out its innocent hands to a wretch destitute of compassion, a stranger to mercy; to one stained with the blood of its parents or protectors; and stretching them in vain? Can we look upon a mourning and disconsolate widow forced from her husband, her offspring, her country; doomed to the grossest violation; her soul torn with anguish, under a sense of complicated guilt which her nature and sensibility abhor; and which may possibly be reiterated through the remains of a miserable existence? The husband stripped of his all, robbed of himself, his honor, his reputation, and his life; if not destroyed in defending his person, his property, and his family? — His value estimated in his own country by those worse than savages, at the price of one intoxicating draught to his arbitrary ruler, or insidious neighbour, by those unoffended ruffians, whose sole delight is to plunge kingdoms and nations into general mourning and universal horror; as all that remain have reason to dread the same treatment as the seasons revolve. — Can a parent of either sex; a child in whose breast reason is only beginning to bud; or those who are rising to maturity, in a land that boasts of civilization, of liberty, and, above all, of the light of christianity, bear to hear, or know, such mournful tragedies are daily carrying on, and not enter their protest against them, on the basis of insulted humanity? If such persons are to be found, we must say, they are unworthy those

common blessings of Providence, whereof they can so coolly and unfeelingly deprive the possessors.

It is not sufficient to rest in endeavors to excite an affectionate concern for the miseries of others ; but we must exert ourselves to relieve their minds, and remove their burdens. — The Priest and the Levite were hardly so destitute of sensibility, as not to feel some risings of pity in their minds on a view of the deplorable condition of a hapless stranger, whose bleeding wounds solicited that relief he was too weak and exhausted to ask. They might possibly felicitate themselves upon the acuteness of their feelings ; that they were not such hardened wretches, who could bear to look upon an object in such a situation without finding some emotions of compassion. Yet of what avail was this, though it might be true in the theory, when they passed over to the other side without administering any relief to a brother in distress ; and perhaps the next trifling object erased the slight and momentary impression ? Of what avail will our knowledge and feelings be, if our hearts are not warmed by the exercise of mercy ? Every one hath it in his power to contribute something towards promoting such an universal frame and temper, by not permitting good impressions to cool ; by their purses ; or, if an ability of that kind is wanting, to encourage the good work in others, by advice, by solicitation, or by their fervent prayers at the throne of mercy, pleading for a divine blessing to attend every laudable exertion on the behalf of injured humanity ; and that the minds of the active may be inspired with such just and pertinent thoughts, as will most effectually promote this great and glorious work : — Restoring liberty and freedom to the oppressed, and remo-

ving their heavy and almost insupportable burdens. And this, all are under every obligation to perform to the utmost of their power ; obligations, arising from every motive which can influence the minds of men and christians. Our obligations as men we have already pointed out, from the common feelings of nature and consanguinity : they are farther strengthened from a sense of the miseries inflicted upon the unhappy sufferers, by men of the most abandoned and profligate characters, who are dead to every tender and compassionate idea : and have totally lost that instinctive softness which endears animals of the same species to each other, unless irritated by personal-injuries.

Those who pursue this detestable traffic, are described by an inspired penman in such a manner, as will render them objects of disgust to every friend of humanity. — “ Their mouths are full of cursing, deceit, and fraud ; under their tongues are mischief and vanity : they sit in the lurking places of the villages, their eyes are privily set upon the poor : they lie in wait secretly, as a lion in his den ; they lie in wait to catch the poor ; they draw them into their net ; they crouch and humble themselves, that the poor may fall by their strong ones : they say, come, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause : let us swallow them up alive, as the grave ; and whole as they who go down to the pit : we shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil.” — This is the language, this is the conduct of those remorseless wretches, who say in their hearts, “ God hath forgotten, he hideth his face, he will never see.” But they lay wait for their own blood. And, though they may attempt to support them-

selves in these iniquitous practices, by the vain imagination that God will not requite them : he hath declared, " he hath seen it, and will requite it with his hand, that he will plead the cause of the poor, and be the helper of the distressed : that he will judge and avenge them of their enemies." — Let all such dread the vengeance of that Almighty Power from whose presence they cannot flee ; whose arm is able to inflict punishment that will make the stoutest heart tremble ; and whose justice is engaged to vindicate its injured rights, by the destruction of incorrigible offenders\*.

\* It may not, perhaps, be improper to take some notice of an objection or two that have been offered with a considerable degree of confidence, by those persons who are engaged in this traffic.

They assert, that many of these unhappy Africans are removed from a state of great distress and peril in their own country.

In answer to this statement of their original situation, we may remark, — That, although the most populous communities within the extent of that traffic enjoy a considerable degree of ease, freedom, and happiness, there are it is confessed, governments of a different description, arbitrary and cruel ; and that the subjects of them must be in a state of much insecurity. That, however the evil tendency and effect of such constitutions of government have been probably (indeed, certainly) much augmented by the edge given to the avarice and despotism of their rulers, in consequence of our encouraging their traffic in the liberties of their unhappy subjects. That by thus strengthening the arm of oppression, and furnishing a new incitement to the fury of rapacity, we increase the wretchedness of those who remain at home, and can offer no apology for forcing others into servitude in remote regions, on the pretence that such commutation is for their advantage : since we have no right, in any case, to inflict a great positive evil, under pretence, that other~~s~~were, in our apprehension, inflicting an equal, or even a greater. *We are answerable for our own guilt*, whatever may be the guilt of others.

The voice of nature and scripture equally teach us to love all mankind as our brethren. Therefore it is said, touching brotherly love, "it need not be written unto

It has likewise been asserted, with no small degree of boasting, that slaves are well treated, and live comfortably. — Here we shall observe that this must of necessity be understood (when the largest allowance shall have been made that candour or credulity can make) as not possible to be admitted without very numerous exceptions. That, were it true in every instance, it is no answer to the seizure, or purchase of the unoffending natives ; none to the horrors of a calamitous voyage ; the death and desolation consequent on the procuring and conveying them to the West Indies : that it is therefore no answer to the great principle upon which the friends to humanity, to the commercial and national honor of this country, are proceeding. — That the negro trade from hence to Africa, and from Africa to the West Indies, ought to be abolished ; nothing which can happen there being capable of removing the insuperable objections to the very nature (to say nothing of the circumstances) of the commerce : but that their treatment when arrived, however mild it may be, and considered as lenity or indulgence towards brutes, is cruelty and extreme injustice towards men, to retain innocent human beings and their posterity for ever in a state of slavery. That to Britons it ought to be enough to say, — Will you be instrumental in furnishing a supply of a race of men, from whatever region, or of whatever color, who you know when obtained, if they survive the means of their procurement, are doomed, with their offspring to be treated as the property of a fellow creature : whether he spares them for his interest, compassionates them from feelings that will spring in some bosoms, in spite of habit or prejudice ; or torments, insults, or destroys them for his humor : property, to go with the other stock of a plantation, and await all the changes of disposition in successive masters, or overseers of estates ? Will you furnish a supply of slavery ; or do you wait for circumstances of aggravation ? Is there not enough in the name and nature of slavery, to resolve you, that such commerce shall not continue under your sanction ? if it were possible any human authority could

you, for ye are taught of God to love one another : —  
 “ If a man say, I love God, and he hateth his brother, he is a liar : for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen ? And this commandment \* have we from him, that he who loveth God, ~~will~~ love his brother also : for whoso shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him ? ” — Our love is to be manifested, not only by tokens of natural affection, in promoting their temporal advantage ; but their spiritual improvement in every grace and virtue. Do christians believe and assuredly expect, that a period shall arrive in this world, when the sceptre of the Redeemer shall extend its benevolent sway over the whole rational creation ? Do they daily pray, that the kingdom of God may come, and his will be done on earth, as it is in heaven ? This event must, in the nature of things, and course of Providence, be produced by adequate means : by the extension of good affections, as well as knowlege. Those doctrines, which have formerly illuminated so large a part of the earth, lost their efficacy through the vices and lukewarmness of professors. By these means, the once celebrated churches of Afia lost the light they did not improve, and sank into bodily and mental fla-

be so cruel as to confer a sanction upon it. It should rather be said, — Will you permit a traffic of such iniquity and horror to be imputed to the laws, and to the name of Britain ?

\* “ A new commandment I give unto you : that ye love one another : as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

very ; the standard of Mohammedan imposture and delusion being erected, and flourishing, where evangelical purity in doctrine and practice once prevailed. An undue love of this world contributed principally to wean their hearts from more important concerns. — This was also the case in Africa, which once abounded with numerous and flourishing churches, which were remarkable for christian light and knowledge : their carelessness and inattention to gospel privileges procured a restraint. This hath been the case with many parts of the earth. — Let us of this nation look to ourselves, that our names ~~are~~ not added to the catalogue ! A gracious Providence hath given us repeated warnings : we have seen, in the history of past ages, flourishing kingdoms brought to desolation, for the same vices which are found among us. Let us, therefore, seize every opportunity of averting those national judgments which yet hang over our heads ! let us pay a strict attention to the instructions of revelation, to break off our sins by righteousness, and our iniquities by shewing mercy, if it may be a lengthening of our tranquillity ! let us hail, with gratitude, with rapture, every opportunity of this kind put into our hands, and improve them to the utmost ! let us rejoice that we are not, apparently given up to hardness of heart, as a nation ; that the mercy of God is raising universal sentiments of benevolence and compassion towards innocent sufferers ! let us fall in with the tide, and account it a distinguishing honor conferred upon us, if we are the first of the nations of Europe (for America has already set the example) to reach out our hands to the miserable, and give a noble example to every surrounding power, that the propriety of our conduct, is in some degree equal to the superior excellency of our

means of improvement! let not unworthy, mean, and selfish considerations damp the rising ardor! but do your duty chearfully; leaving the event to him, who by his Providence will so overrule every circumstance, as shall promote the public happiness, and establish it upon the best, the strongest foundation: — the support of Omnipotence.

If all mankind are brethren; if all are derived from the same source; then it cannot be esteemed presumptuous to point out, in a few words, the evident duty of all; from the head that is adorned with regal honors, to the meanest subject of government.

Though kings are so highly exalted in the scale of providence, and possess a legal superiority conferred upon them by their fellow-men; yet this is not to render them tyrants and scourges, but nursing fathers to that part of the family over which they more especially preside; and by their examples to encourage the practice of humanity and benevolence: as their stations are more exalted, they will be more readily observed as examples of virtue or vice. If their minds are not perverted by ambition, pride, and haughtiness; if their natural affections are not deprived of their proper tone, by constant scenes of prosperity, or a regular supply of every thing which can gratify their appetites without the fatigue of a wish; every circumstance administering to their enjoyment as extensively as the condition of sublunary things can admit. Yet even they must feel they are men, liable to the same infirmities, pains, disorders, and death. They are dependant on the same moral government, objects of the same providential care, and have equally

a Master in heaven : they must stand before the same judgment seat to give an account of their conduct ; and final happiness or misery will 'be equally their portion, according to the improvement or abuse of their advantages. The character of one who honorably fulfils the duties of this office, is exemplified in such striking traits in holy writ, that it will ever remain a perfect model of such virtues which ought to be conspicuous in those who preside over large communities : — “ *The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me ; I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy : I put on righteousness, and it clothed me ; my judgment was a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame : I was a father to the poor, and the cause which I knew not I searched out. And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth : I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him.* ” — No character is so amiable as that which discovers the most exalted benevolence ; as that which exerts all its influence to alleviate the sufferings of the community at large ; as that which restrains all acts of violence and rapine, which curbs the impetuous de-fires of the vicious and irregular, which maintains decency, good order, peace, and tranquillity, by just, wholesome, and equitable laws ; and, by an uniform attention to the interests of virtue, integrity, and genuine goodness, mercy, and love, discountenances and endeavors to banish those turbulent and disorderly passions which delight in scenes of confusion, anarchy, and blood ; in gratifying the desires of him who was a murderer from the beginning ; and whose perpetual aim is, to involve mankind in that punishment which he suffers as the first apostate from God and holiness. Be wise.

therefore, O ye kings! be instructed, O ye judges and legislators of the earth! join, as a firm and compact band, in counteracting the devices of those artful and insidious enemies; let not the crafty insinuations of infernal agents seduce you from your duty! you know there is a superior Lawgiver; you know the Supreme Judge marks your conduct, and will one day pass an irreversible sentence upon your actions; you cannot then shroud yourselves under the coverings of worldly policy; nothing will pass with him but goodness and true holiness; it will not be sufficient to make such trifling excuses as impose upon our fellow-men, to him who knows the heart: if therefore you would conciliate his favor, do judgment and justice, without respect of persons, and the Almighty will bless and protect you; your own consciences will afford you a perpetual feast, a consolation of which none can deprive you, though you may be slighted and disregarded for your integrity and uprightness.

Let those who are engaged in the pursuits of commerce reflect, that those mutual interchanges whereby they are connected with distant countries, carry in them the establishment of virtue, honor, generosity, and every good principle; that those are absolutely, and to all intents and purposes, forfeiting their good faith and benevolence, their claim to humanity, to public protection, who conceive the persons of men may be put on a level with perishable commodities. This is a system of barter forbidden by every law, divine or human: it is replete with injustice, with cruelty, with every thing that can deform the human character, and render it an object of horror.

The threatenings of the scripture are also pointed with peculiar severity against such persons in this world : — “ Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong ; that useth his neighbour’s service without wages, and giveth him naught for his work : thine eyes and thine heart are but for thy covetousness, and to shed innocent blood ; and for oppression and for violence to do it. Woe unto him that coveteth an evil covetousness, that he may set his nest on high ; thou hast consulted shame to thy house, by cutting off many people ; and hast sinned against thy soul. Behold, says the Almighty, I have smitten my hand at thy dishonest gain thou hast made, and will shake thee out of my lap. ‘ If you do not fear my glorious and fearful name, and obey my commands, I will make your plagues wonderful.’ ” — Is there not reason to dread, that such conduct will bring a curse upon that land, in general, which, after an acquaintance with the magnitude of this crime, doth not use every lawful means in their power to prevent it ?

Every order and description of persons, from the highest to the lowest, are under the strongest obligations to render reciprocal services and benefits to each other. And these obligations are not confined merely to that part of the community wherewith they are more immediately connected ; but extend to the whole species, without distinction. To all ranks of men therefore would I address myself ; I would call forth those innate feelings which God has implanted in their nature and constitution. — And may I not call in vain !

Are not the natural evils attendant on the present

state sufficient to excite pity and compassion in the most obdurate breast? Are they not sufficient to try the patience of every individual? Can we view a man, and a brother, with his countenance expressive of the keenest anguish, from sufferings almost exceeding human fortitude; can we view him with his body extended, as upon a rack, with acute or lingering distempers, and, instead of alleviating, (if not by outward application) by offering that universal balm of sympathetic pity and commiseration, to interest the feelings of the sufferer, add to these evils, and make the cup of sorrow overflow beyond measure? This conduct would prove an insensibility, a ferocity of disposition which must create universal abhorrence. If we shew compassion and a humane temper towards those who are of the same community, or subjects of the same government and laws; the more distant inhabitant of the world hath an equal title to the exercise of the like virtues. Here one single question honestly and impartially answered will effectually decide the point in dispute, and destroy that infamous traffic which is a disgrace to all men; and of all nations, — to Britons; who have such exalted sentiments of liberty, who have shed torrents of blood to establish it among themselves, and who enjoy the greatest share of personal freedom of any collective body under the sun. I would ask those champions for liberty, whose very laws will not permit a slave, under that distinction, to exist in their favored land, by what authority they claim a privilege to enter the dominions of a free and happy people, a people not subject to their laws, and over whose persons and property they have not the least shadow of controul, and seizing their persons by craft or open violence, confign them over to perpetual slavery, to a bondage which will

terminate only with their existence ? An authority of this nature when claimed, ought to be accompanied with the sanction of a divine commission ; and that commission neither liable to misconception or doubt, but armed with sufficient evidence completely to obviate every objection which might be offered against its authenticity. And till such an instrument appears, the friends of humanity must enter their unanimous and hearty protest against those practices, as irrational, unscriptural, unjust, unnatural, and to the highest degree diabolical.

Let me therefore, my brethren ! exhort and implore you, by the bonds of humanity, by every principle of benevolence and compassion, by your regard to your own souls, by your wishes to obtain future happiness, by the dying love of Jesus ; let me beseech you by the mercies of God, and adjure you by the terrors of the Lord, by the contemplation of that awful and interesting period, when you must personally appear before the impartial tribunal of the Judge of all the earth, to give a strict account of *all the deeds* done in the body ; by the dread of the Omnipotent Jehovah ; by those striking motives let me exhort you to act, not only in this, but in every other situation of life, in such a manner, as will ensure the favorable testimony of a good conscience ; earnestly imploring the God of all grace to grant his Divine Spirit, and those influences whereby we shall all delight, not only in knowing, but doing his will ; which is, to extend happiness, to the utmost of our power, to all the human race ; to offer liberty to the captive ; and likewise to give the means of light to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death ; to guide their feet in the way of peace : that, in the presence of an assembled world, we

may obtain the applause of our Judge, recorded in this affecting language : — “ Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world ! for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat ; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink ; I was a stranger, and ye took me in ; naked, and ye clothed me ; I was sick, and ye visited me ; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. — Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” — And when those who have acted opposite hereto shall be ejected into their allotted punishment, the righteous shall enter into life eternal ; into his immediate presence, where there is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.







